

# THE OXFORD INTELLIGENCER.

HOWARD FALCONER,

\$2 Per Annum in Advance, or \$2 50 at the end of the Year.

EDITOR & PROPRIETOR.

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## THE INTELLIGENCER,

Is Published Every Wednesday Morning

HOWARD FALCONER,

OXFORD, MISSISSIPPI.

Subscription price \$2 in advance, or \$2 50 at the end of the year.

OFFICE:—In the Masonic Building, up stairs, south side of the Public Square.

RATES OF ADVERTISING.

TEN LINES MAKE ONE SQUARE.

1 Square..... \$4 00 \$6 00 \$12 00

2 Squares..... 8 00 12 00 24 00

3 Squares..... 12 00 18 00 36 00

Four Squares..... 16 00 24 00 48 00

Half column..... 20 00 30 00 60 00

Three-fourth column..... 25 00 37 50 75 00

One column..... 40 00 60 00 120 00

Advertisements may be renewed at any time by paying for composition, \$1 per thousand lines.

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Articles of a personal character only admitted at the option of the Proprietor, and charged 20 cents a line.

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Transient advertisements payable in advance.

Announcing Candidates for City offices..... \$ 2 50

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to be paid invariably in advance.

### Katie's Secret.

The sunlight is beautiful, mother,

And sweetly the flowers bloom to-day,

And birds in the branches of hawthorn

Are caroling ever so gay;

And down by the rocks in the meadow

The rill trickles with a song;

And, mother, I too, have been singing

The merriest all the day long.

Last night I was weeping, dear mother,

Last night I was weeping alone,

The world was so dark and dreary,

My heart it grew heavy as stone!

I thought of the lonely and loveless—

All lonely and loveless was I!

I can scarce tell why it was, mother,

But, oh! I was wishing to die!

Last night I was weeping, dear mother,

But Willie came down by the gate,

And whispered "Come out in the moonlight,

I've something to say to you Kate."

Oh! mother, to him I am dearer

Than all the world beside,

He told me so out in the moonlight—

He called me his darling, his bride!

So now, I will gather me roses

To twine in my long braided hair;

And Willie will come in the evening

And will smile when he sees me so fair;

And out in the moonlight we'll wander,

And down by the old hawthorn tree,

Oh! mother, I wonder if any

Were ever so happy as we?

From Chambers' Journal.

### Three Startling Situations.

My existence, I am happy to say, has not

been what any conscientious "gentleman con-

nected with the press" would feel himself

justified in calling "checked." I did not

begin life as the heir to a dukedom, find

myself at twenty-one to have been illegitimate,

and eventually in a position to dictate to some

popular author, from the sick ward of a union

workhouse, the interesting raw materials for

his *novellette*, "The Falling Star." Neither

did I begin life as a lad in the knife-house, and

"Creeping up from high to higher,

Become on fortune's crowding slope,

The centre of a world's desire,

And fit with alms to cope."

The prayer of my grandfather for me was

like Agur's that I should have neither riches

nor poverty; he left me that much above

inheritance—which, to a reasonable man, is

nevertheless the best in the world, since it

enables him to pursue all good objects for

their own sake—"a moderate independence;"

and I have kept it ever since.

Hence, O reader, it is in vain to expect

from this comfortable quill either soaring

flights into the empyrean, (with a large E)

or down slopes into the Aysms. I know no

more of palaces than I do of prisons; and yet

I have had my three "startling situations,"

too. Most mortals who have grown to be

men and women, have had some experience

always afterwards observable to their mind's

eye in the level road of their existence, even

if they be the being pitched out of a

mercy-ground at fair, or the having proposals

of marriage tendered to them by black

men; and why not I, like the rest?

First, then, I have had the privilege of be-

holding a spiritual manifestation—three dis-

inct, or, at all events, separate ghosts at the

same time.

This happened on my way from Calais to

Paris in the winter of 1832. The boat, as it

always does when I am in it—a proof of my

honest assertion that there is nothing about

perhaps, but what was that running along the

hedge—on the top of the side of the Dil-

gence, and yet a little in advance, so as to

turn back and look at it and me! That woke

me soon enough and most thoroughly. What

business had Mary Ross, my little ward—who

had lately been left a widow with two chil-

dren, and whom I had bidden good-bye to

only a few days before—what business I say,

had she to be running atop of a roadside

hedge between Calais and Paris at midnight,

always keeping her head turned round, and

her eyes fixed on me? There was not the

least doubt of its being Mary, although I had

never seen her with look of pain and entreaty

on her face before. I am thankful to think

that she never had to ask anything, either

for herself or others, twice from me. She

never looked before her, but glided swiftly

along the hedge; and when a gap or a gate

intervened, seemed to leap it without any

spring or unusual exertion. When her eyes

were not on mine, they were fixed on one or

other of the fore wheels of the Diligence; and

presently I leaned over to see what was

attracting her in the left hand one. Georgey

was there—Georgey Ross, her eldest son, re-

volutioning upon his rim, disappearing and com-

ing up again as though he were bound to it,

with his white face upward toward me and

her, but with shut eyes. His brother Charles

on the other wheel, I knew, although, of course

I could not see him; and presently, upon the

great empty front seat, there lay stretched on

either side of me those same two boys, in

dead, poor dresses, which—since they were

long, white things, as it subsequently turned

out, might have been shrouds. I had scarce-

ly time to put my hands out, right and left

and through each of these forms, to feel the

bare cushion of the seat, when the driver,

with a burst of *saerco*, woke and lashed the

horses, calling them pigs and demons. Then

the children and their dear mother vanished

from my sight forever. Being of a plagiatory

or, as I prefer to call it, of a philosophical dis-

position; I simply entered in my note-book,

"Curious illusion produced (December 14,

1832,) caused by hunger and fatigue."

Nevertheless, as I sat at breakfast in Paris

on the morning of the nineteenth, I received

word by post that Mary Ross and her two

children were all dead with typhus fever.

Mary, the letter said, "kept asking for you,

William, as though you could have saved her

little ones, and even after they were out of

the reach of earthly aid." She herself did

not survive them more than a few hours.

They all died on the fourteenth.

My second "startling situation" was not

a ghostly one, although the locality was far

better adapted for such a phenomenon than

the high road to Paris—a fine old manor

house in Staffordshire, that had been a petty

stronghold in the time of the civil wars.

Rapier had sailed out of it at the head of his

rakishly Barbuthers, and Cromwell had

stormed it with his Ironsides, smiling Agur

—that is to say, its then possessor, Sir Jasper

Seton—ship and thigh. He was cut to

pieces in the great hall, which is now the

music-room, or was, in the days I knew it;

and the dash of steel is still to be heard there

in wild winter midnight, although I cannot

said that I ever detected it for myself, for

certain. There were, however, the most mys-

terious nightly sounds in that old house,

whose furniture, though good and costly,

was throughout, from garret to still room,

exceeding ancient. I never was, indeed, in

any dwelling-house where antiquity had it so

much her own way. It was full of unces-

sary and unexpected flights of stairs, of tor-

tuous passages, of long dark slippery gal-

leries, and especially lingering echoes, always

when a grim north-easter was trying the

doors and windows from without, and the

rats were at work as usual with their potato-

sacks and list-slippers, within, he added con-

siderably to the tumult by ringing a huge

hand alarm bell which he had placed in his

bedroom in case of such an emergency—and

all the inmates of the mansion flocked to the

summons as bees are gathered by the hives-

men. We found the Captain in his dressing-

gown, in the center of the dressing gallery,

standing by an ugly mark in the panelling,

which he had made with the muzzle of his

pistol.

"Here he is," cried he, "the fellow went

through here, I'll take my oath! I heard him

listening at my door, and was out in a min-

ute, taking a snapshot at him, but the thing

missed fire."

"Heard whom?—heard whom?" inquired

Sir Arthur.

"I don't know, how should I?" replied the

young man. "Perhaps a ghost; or, if not some-

body who was never so near being a ghost,

I'll warrant him, as he was five minutes back,

I'll have this panel broken in. No, father,

we'll not leave it till to-morrow, if you please;

that's how these things go on—let's do it at

once. There's a pickaxe in the stable-yard;

go and fetch it, Thomas."

So the pickaxe was brought, and Sir Ar-

thur unwillingly assenting—we broke up the

black oak paneling into a hundred splinters,

and then through a thick stone wall, without

a hinge or entrance, as it seemed, of my kind

in it, into a chamber, of the existence of

which no person in the house had ever known.

A modern chamber—a small sitting-room,

barely furnished with chairs and table of a

date of construction later of at least two hun-

dred years than anything in the house, ex-

cept the patent safe; but there was no win-

dows to the room, nor any means of ingress

that could be discovered, save that very

rough one of our own. I do not think that

either ghost or burglar could have effected

all more strangely than the sight of that

unattended and modern room. It is still to

be seen in the west gallery of Burly Hall,

the sole approach to it—for so the Setons

will have it—yet lying open between the

splintered planks and broken stonework, as

when it was first found. The mystery con-

cerning it and occupants—if any—is still un-

solved, and the rats make just as much noise

about the grand old place as ever.

My third remarkable adventure occurred to

me in broad daylight, when it is especially

credible to a situation to be "startling," as

mine undoubtedly was. I was in Chester,

residing with my family, consisting of my

wife and a grown up son and daughter, in

temporary lodgings, three stories high, but

otherwise very convenient. It was ten o'clock

in the morning, but, I am ashamed to say,

we were still at breakfast, for we were away

from home on pleasure and had fallen into

all sorts of idle habits. Our conversation

happened to be upon an invective my wife

had met with in the town on the preceding

day. Some coal-brokers were unearthing

upon the pavement, and the roadway being

very wet, she asked them to desist from their

occupation for a moment, so that she might

pass. They did so, but not without one of

them observing, "And how do you think we

should get our work done, missis, if we was

to wait for every fool as goes by?" We were

expressing our hope that this gentleman's

remark was not an exemplification of Chester

manners, when the third window of our room

—the furthest from the table—was violently

thrown open, and the head and unmeted

shoulders of a man thrust themselves inward.

My son and I were so overcome with aston-

ishment, that we were unable to utter a

word until about a fortnight afterward. The

subject by that time was avoided by us as

possible, while the ladies were present;

but one forenoon, while my son and I were

speaking of it as the maid was laying the

luncheon-cloth, he observed:—

"Do you know, father, I have been think-

ing a good deal about the odd appearance of

that horrible man's head, and I have come to